

MUSKEGON COUNTY

MICHIGAN

May 19, 2015

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Dear Commerce and Trade Committee Members:

I am writing to submit my testimony in opposition to House Bills 4052 and Senate Bill 337. As a Muskegon County Commissioner for approximately 8 years, I have great concerns about these bills intervening in my local community's ability to build upon state minimums. Given the overly broad nature of this bill, I am also concerned this bill may have unintended consequences and needlessly interferes with our local community to act in a way that best serves Muskegon County.

When state lawmakers disagree with a local solution adopted by local residents or local community reasons it is wrong to pass a state law to prohibit the local solution. When special corporate interests want to stop local actions they disagree with, they turn to you to prohibit local decision making. This is wrong, and sadly corrupts the democratic process.

When Muskegon County Commissioners passed a Resolution in Support of "Move the Box" Initiative Regarding Criminal Background Checks approximately three years ago, we were completely within the bounds of state law; not only would this legislation invalidate that initiative, it would interfere with our ability to pass future ordinances we believe best met the needs of Muskegon County. It is my belief that local communities are best positioned to know and understand the needs of their communities, including cost of living and employment prospects. It is also my belief that local governments exist to make sure that laws and policies meet the needs and values of the people who live there. As long as local laws do not violate state laws, the state government shouldn't punish localities by standing in their way.

I hope you will consider this testimony and join myself and other local elected leaders in opposing House Bill 4052 and Senate Bill 337

Sincerely,



Kenneth Mahoney, County Commissioner
District #9